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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/765,514	01/26/2004	Richard T. Miller	492.342	1038

27023 7590 11/22/2006

THE GLAD PRODUCTS COMPANY
1221 BROADWAY #2344
OAKLAND, CA 94623-1305

EXAMINER

HYLTON, ROBIN ANNETTE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3781

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/765,514

Applicant(s)

MILLER ET AL.

Examiner

Robin A. Hylton

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 August 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 28 and 29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 and 30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of the restriction requirement in the reply filed on August 30, 2006 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the search of both inventions can be made without serious burden to the examiner since "the Office has failed to allege or establish that examining of all the claims would constitute a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction were not required". This is not found persuasive because the Office is not required to initially set forth why a serious burden arises from searching different inventions. As set forth in MPEP 803, "[for] purposes of the initial requirement, a serious burden on the examiner may be prima facie shown by appropriate explanation of separate classification, or separate status in the art, or a different field of search as defined in MPEP § 808.02."

In response to applicant's assertion that no serious burden is placed upon the examiner to examine both inventions, the issue of "serious burden" must be examined. A "serious burden" is measured both in terms of time required to search an invention in an unfamiliar art area and the issues that arise from the additional limitations set forth in the different invention(s). In the instant case, the additional limitations of inserting an object, sealing the packaging and forcing fluid across an opening, and moving the valve raises issues not considered in examination of the product.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. This application contains claims 28 and 29 drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in the Office action mailed June 2, 2006. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
4. Claims 1-27 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogura in view of Domke (US 5,326,176).

Ogura teaches a valve element comprising a membrane having a domed central portion which has a first position to obstruct fluid communication through an aperture and a second position to allow fluid communication through the aperture. Ogura teaches at column 9, lines 61-62 that a peeling assistant part is not necessary to the invention disclosed therein. Ogura is silent regarding a base element, including a seat portion and an aperture, attached to a border of the membrane.

Domke teaches a valve element for selectively facilitating fluid communication wherein the valve element either includes or does not include a base element attached to a border of the membrane, the base element including a seat portion and an aperture. Domke teaches the base element *may* be formed of PVC material, but is not limited to PVC.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of a base element to the valve of Ogura. Doing so is a known alternative valve structure that will also allow for selective facilitating fluid communication therethrough and will maintain the valve on the packaging without worry of inadvertent complete or partial removal of the valve.

Ogura as modified discloses the claimed invention except for the membrane comprising a semi-rigid material and the base element of a flexible material. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the membrane of a semi-rigid material and the base element of a flexible element, since it has been held to be

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within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed August 30, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Although the claims have been amended to set forth the new limitations of the materials of the membrane and base element, applicant provided arguments regarding patentability of the instant claims. Thus, the examiner offers the counter arguments in response thereto.

The material of the valve membrane and the base element are subject to the use of the valve as well as the packaging to which it is attached. Thus, the material used to manufacture the valve and valve seat would have been a matter of obvious design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, since it appears the material choice would work equally as well as applicant's claimed device.

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

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7. Applicant is duly reminded that a complete response must satisfy the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.111, including: "The reply must present arguments pointing out the specific distinctions believed to render the claims, including any newly presented claims, patentable over any applied references. A general allegation that the claims "define a patentable invention" without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references does not comply with the requirements of this section. Moreover, "The prompt development of a clear Issue requires that the replies of the applicant meet the objections to and rejections of the claims." Applicant should also specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure. See MPEP 2163.06 II(A), MPEP 2163.06 and MPEP 714.02. The "disclosure" includes the claims, the specification and the drawings.

8. In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Group 3720/80 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (571) 273-8300. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into Group 3720 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

9. It is called to applicant's attention that if a communication is faxed before the reply time has expired, applicant may submit the reply with a "Certificate of Facsimile" which merely asserts that the reply is being faxed on a given date. So faxed, before the period for reply has expired, the reply may be considered timely. A suggested format for a certificate follows:

I hereby certify that this correspondence for Application Serial No. _____ is being facsimiled to The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via fax number 571-273-8300 on the date shown below:

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate

Signature _____

Date _____

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10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robin Hylton whose telephone number is (571) 272-4540. The examiner can normally be reached Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern time).

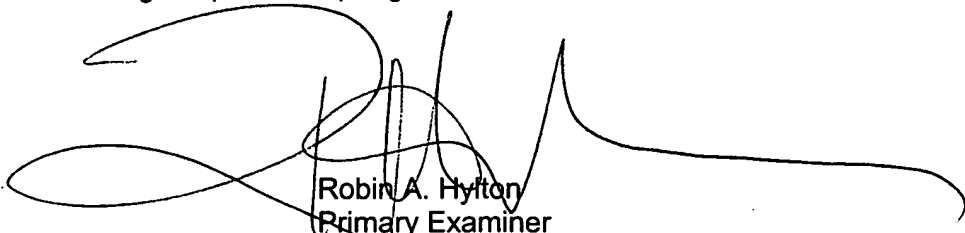
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Stashick, can be reached on (571) 272-4561.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Other helpful telephone numbers are listed for applicant's benefit:

- Allowed Files & Publication (888) 786-0101
- Assignment Branch (800) 972-6382
- Certificates of Correction (703) 305-8309
- Fee Questions (571) 272-6400
- Inventor Assistance Center (800) PTO-9199
- Petitions/special Programs (571) 272-3282
- Information Help line 1-800-786-9199
- Internet PTO-Home Page <http://www.uspto.gov>

RAH
November 16, 2006



Robin A. Hylton
Primary Examiner
GAU 3781